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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a study of the oral communication between international university students in an intensive English program (IEP) and office support staff at the IEP office. The study was based on audiotaped observations and interviews of students and office staff, along with questionnaires distributed to all 150 students enrolled in the IEP. It found that miscommunication often occurred due to differences in social and grammatical construction by the speakers. The paper offers suggestions for improving communication between office staff and IEP students, including the development of a staff training program, information booklets for students, and an IEP student center. Three appendixes provide copies of the student questionnaire, questionnaire responses, and a conversation transcript. (MDM)

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ED 372 611

"Yes I think it's you": A discussion of intercultural communication

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This paper examines a cross-cultural service encounter; specifically an office interaction between an American office worker and an international student at an intensive English program, (IEP) and demonstrates how differences in social and grammatical constructions led to miscommunication. In addition, data from a (IEP) student questionnaire on interaction styles, and data from interviews with some of the (IEP) students, exemplify the many issues of assumptions and expectations in all kinds of cross-cultural interactions and indicate that greater understanding of diverse interaction styles is necessary to avoid miscommunication.

Service encounters, such as seeking information at an information desk, doctor visits, banking, etc., are one domain where effectiveness is critical for successful problem-solving. Interactions involving speakers of different cultural backgrounds increase the possibility of miscommunication. An intensive English language program at a university in Philadelphia has many such encounters involving office support staff and international students. By examining the interlocutors' social and grammatical constructions, we can analyze how communication breakdown occurs and learn how to better facilitate information transmission.

The purpose of the present study is 1) to examine the office interaction at an intensive English language program as an example of service encounters involving differing communication methods, and, 2) to investigate how the interlocutors' choice of contextualization cues frames an interaction. Within the context of interaction style, the following issues are discussed:

1) grammatical constructions
2) frames
3) group dynamics

These aspects of language competency–grammar constructions, frames, and group dynamics–are important to consider when addressing strategies for better intercultural communication in service encounters as well as for promoting cooperation and understanding in an intercultural education setting.

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Methods

Setting

The site of the current study is an intensive English language program (here referred to as IEP) at a university. The program is in its fourth year of operation and is expanding rapidly. To maintain fulltime student visa status, students are required to take at least eighteen hours of classes consisting of spoken and written skills as well as a choice of electives (i.e. grammar, conversation, academic reading/writing). At the beginning of each 11-week session there is a 3-day orientation program. During this time, students are tested on their speaking and writing skills and appropriately placed in one of the six levels offered. Students are also given information on such issues as elective choices, activities, personal safety, health insurance, housing, banking, the university, and the city of Philadelphia.

IEP occupies several rooms in the basement of one of the university's academic buildings. The main office is small, 10' X 12', and is the center of much activity. Two staff members and numerous international students can usually be found in the office throughout the day.

The personnel at IEP consists of the Director and the Associate Director, both of whom have doctoral degrees; 3 full-time teachers, each with a minimum of a master's degree; and approximately 20 part-time teachers, all of whom have a master's degree in ESL, linguistics, or related fields. The Activity Coordinators and the office support staff are graduate students in either Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) or Intercultural Communication (ICC).

The program is technically a part of the university's Department of Humanities and Communications. Despite this, the students are limited in their participation as full-time students. For example, the IEP students may use their identification cards for entry into the University's recreation areas and computing center, but they are denied book-borrowing privileges and access to the computer data-base.

Participants

This study focuses on international students and four members of the IEP office support staff who are pre-professionals in the fields of TESOL and ICC. The staff are all part-time employees, teaching at least one elective and working an average of 20 hours a week in the main office. The office staff duties include assisting the students with admission, housing, health insurance, payment, class conflicts, and activity participation. These staff members are given little or no training in dealing with international students.

The international students range in age from 18-30 years old and are students and professionals from a vast array of countries, the principles being Taiwan, People's Republic of China, South Korea, Japan, Spain, Italy, Thailand, Peru, Colombia, and Kuwait. The IEP students have diverse motivations for learning English. Many of them intend to enroll in a North American undergraduate or graduate degree program, while others want to broaden their opportunities in their own country. Still other students have moved to the United States with a spouse and want to study English for basic survival or to "have something to do," as they are not allowed to be employed as non-US citizens.

The researchers were members of the part time office staff at the time of this study. In this capacity, they acted as participant observers and collected data in which they themselves took part. This allowed them to "be able to enter speech events relatively unobtrusively" (Hymes, 1972:120). While this approach could bias the data collection and analysis, the researchers' extensive role in the study's setting allowed for more candid responses from the students and a more comprehensive understanding of the assumptions and expectations of the IEP employees.

Collection Methods

After receiving permission and support from the IEP Director and Associate Director, the researchers used an ethnographic approach by collecting data from audiotaped interactions, interviews, and questionnaires. This process of multiple methods of inquiry, or triangulation, is used to confirm or disconfirm results of each of the other data samples.

Sessions of an average of 90 minutes were tape-recorded in the main office. The researchers were looking for naturally-occurring speech between international students and office support staff. Samples of natural occurring speech are critical for a better understanding of what in fact is happening in a spontaneous, uncontrolled setting. Once the researchers identified critical incidents, incidents during which there was a communication breakdown seemingly due to grammatical construction and framing, permission was sought to use the recorded data.[1]

The questionnaire (Appendix A) was distributed to all enrolled students (150) with the students' permission to use the anonymous responses for research purposes. Biographical information regarding age, sex, and native language was collected. Various possible interactions were presented such as "I prefer to have my questions resolved in person," and, "If I didn't understand an answer I would ask/try again." The students were then asked to rate their experiences interacting with the IEP staff, teachers, and administrators. Finally open-ended questions allowed the students an opportunity to

express their thoughts on how the IEP may be different than a university in their home country and how the IEP could improve its services.

Ten students were interviewed, each of whom were enrolled in the researchers' classes and had volunteered to be interviewed regarding their impression of IEP.[2] Open-ended questions such as "How would you describe (IEP) to a friend?" were asked of the participants to allow for a closer representation of the student's experiences and less of the researchers' assumptions (see Gumperz, 1982).

Analysis Methods

Upon reviewing the taped conversations, the investigators selected one interaction and analyzed it to investigate how the interlocutors choice of contextualization cues frames an interaction. This interaction was the primary source of data for interpretation. By color-coding the transcription for structural contextualization cues used by the participants, patterns emerged from the data; these patterns illustrate the participants' interaction styles. The speakers' intonation patterns recorded by the researcher involved were noted during the transcription of the speech event.

Supporting and counter examples of the primary data were found by using the information collected from the questionnaires and the interviews. The questionnaire included 22 statements that the researchers believed to be relevant to the students' expectations of communication with the IEP staff. The students were asked to rate the statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In addition they were asked five free-response questions (Appendix A: questions 23-27) about their experiences and recommendations. Of the 150 questionnaires distributed by the students primary classroom teachers, 54 (36%) were collected. The students' responses to questions 1-22 were averaged; the answers were then categorized by the overall mean score and by the respondents' self-reported native languages (Appendix B). The researchers interviewed ten volunteer students on an individual basis, each for approximately 15-20 minutes. The interviews were then transcribed and reviewed for further insight into IEP students' expectations. Through this ethnographic approach, the researchers were able to gather personal and detailed information about the student community's perspective.

Findings

One particular interaction from the taped conversations was selected as a critical incident for the research due to the office staff member's[3] report of feeling frustrated and angry at the termination of the interaction. The participants in this interaction were a 24-year-old female native English-speaking staff member (O) and a 21-year-old female native

Korean-speaking student (S). The student had just arrived at the university and came to the Director for help. The Director in turn referred her to O. In the analysis of the transcript, several characteristics of conflicting grammatical construction and frames were identified as lending to the difficulties between the interlocutors.

Grammatical Construction

The relationship between form and function is demonstrated by the influence of a speaker's word choice on a speech event (Austin, 1975). The researchers perceived that this particular speech event had, in fact, two significant parts. (See Appendix C for a full transcript.)

1. S: I need registration
2. O: right, but you filled you the application form right?
3. S: yeah
4. O: and so now you need to take a test
5. S: Yeah I took, took...
6. O: you took a test... ok so you're ju-
7. you're not sure now what you're suppose to do is that it?
8. S: y-
9. O: or you're not sure of
10. your classes?
11. S: Yeah I didn't know registration means so
12. O: OH registration just meant to fill out
13. an application and pay tuition and ....
14. S: when I pay tuition
15. O: Okay, as soon as possible
16. S: Where? ((laugh))
17. O: here=
18. S: okay
19. O: =everything is here=
20. S: okay
21. O: =and whenever you have any questions come here I'll try to help you
22. S: uhh...
23. O: oh that's ok
24. S: I can't.... Can I check ((unintelligible))..I'm not sure ((laugh))
25. O: So you're not sure of your classes, or what, ok, did you register
26. for second half starting today or second half
27. S: yes second half...somebody made a mistake
28. so I start second half but they send me mail in the letter full time
29. O:Ok so lets just check I ok, What is your family name?
30. S: J_
31. O: J-- ((spells))..((checks in the computer))..., and is it umm..wait lets try it
32. again and your first name
33. S: Y– K– ((spells))
34. ((Administrator interrupts))
35. O: okay, and this is your mailing address=
36. S: yes
37. O:=and we have you full time and you are second half, right?
38. S: yeah
39. O: and so you are second half fall term full time
40. S: yes full time
41. O: okay second half and so... your bill will be different then. di- did
42. you? umm Your bill is $950
43. S: $950?

44 O: right, ok
45 S: Can I pay now?
46 O: Sure, that would be wonderful okay
((Administrator interrupts))
47 S: do check?
48 O: uhuh. Do you need a pen?
49 S: N-no. I don't have know who
50 O: Oh D- University
51 S: oh
52 O: I can put it there..((fills out check)). okay let me give you a receipt ((long
53. pause)) okay, you're all set....okay.
54 S: umm.. somebody called me,hmm she need some letters. like things like

In the first part (lines 1 through 54), the interaction begins with O making a guess about the student's needs. The linguistic form that O chooses is based on her presupposing the object of the student's questions. For example, her intonation often lacks the rising usually employed in questions, thus making questions appear to be more like statements: evidence that she just wants verification for her assumptions is her excessive use of "right" and "okay" (Gumperz, 1982:131).

Other contextualization cues include O's use of shifters and pronouns, which dramatically demonstrate her assuming control of the situation. O focuses her attention on getting S to do something. This is evidenced by her use of shifters like "this" and definite article "the" which anchor the individual items to the speech event (Silverstein, 1976; Jakobson, 1971) as in the following lines

2. O: right, but you filled out the application form right?
6. O: you took the test..so you're ju-
35. O: okay and this is your mailing address
64. O: was it in this office
79. O: If you want to change to an F-1 visa, which you do...then you need the bank statement

O has an additional four instances of using the connotative function in the following:

12. O: OH registration just meant to fill out
15. O: okay, as soon as possible
19. O: =everything is here=lines
21. O: =and whenever you have any questions come here and I'll try to help you

Gumperz (1982) points out that the framing of a situation is made by the pronoun choices of the participants by indexing, in effect pointing out, the focus of the interaction. Therefore, it is critical to analyze the use of pronouns by the different participants to understand what each is focusing on in the interaction. Pronoun usage to this point in the interaction can be broken down as in Table 1.

Table 1: Pronoun usage lines 1-21

	I	me	you(re)	your	we	(let) us
S:	13	1	0	0	0	0
O:	2	1	18	8	1	3

Jakobson's (1971) discussion demonstrates how O's use of the pronoun "you" reveals her emphasis on getting the student to do something, as in this example:

9. O: or you're not sure of
10. your classes?
11 S: Yeah I didn't know registration means so
12 O: OH registration just meant to fill out
13. an application and pay tuition and ....

On the other hand, S uses such strategies as reference to the third person and accepting her positioning as the power inferior in this interaction (see Davies & Harre, in press).

53. pause)) okay, you're all set....okay.
54 S: umm.. somebody called me,hmm she need some letters. like things like
55 bank statement or

The researchers found it most interesting that the student's intent is not known until more than half way through the interaction. In line 53, O's intonation, and the tone of dismissal infer the completion of the interaction. However, S asserts that there is in fact more information needed.

52 O: I can put it there..((fills out check)). okay let me give you a receipt ((long
53. pause)) okay, you're all set....okay.
54 S: umm.. somebody called me,hmm she need some letters. like things like
55 bank state ment or
56 O: Oh. Let me see.. um well... what kind of visa do you have?
58* S: B-2
59 O: B-2 do you want to change to a=
60. S: yes
61. O: =you want to change to an F-1. Did you give us
62 a bank statement and..
63 S: I, I gave someone, but she she told me she didn't need it
64 O: was it in this office?
65 S: Yes, I think it's you

*Due to an error in the origianl transcript, line 57 is missing.

A dramatic shift in structural usage is apparent in line 54 and culminates in line 65. Suddenly S shifts away from indirect, self-referential speech and re-positions both participants (Goffman, 1981; Davies & Harre, in press). In the last line of the above

excerpt, both interlocutors demonstrate the focus on the context by indirect and abstract references:

63. O: was it in this office?

64. S: Yes, I think it's you

However, S changes the focus by answering "Yes, I think it's you," whereby she indexes O as the responsible party. Her use of a hedging technique, "I think," distances her from the statement (Goffman, 1981:148), but the footing has none-the-less changed S's context focus so that it is entirely on O.

O's confusion at the sudden reversal of the positioning is evident in the subsequent pauses, pitch levels, and discernible stress in her voice (self-reported during transcription) and one of her only uses of the pronoun "I."

Frames

Any interaction is framed by the knowledge the speakers bring to the present speech situation, in particular their interpretations of the context based on previous experience. As Wolfson points out, gender, age, relative status, and often socioeconomic status of the interlocutors influence language choices and patterns (1989:74). This process is quite dynamic because each speech situation is continuously reevaluated and reinterpreted by the interlocutors (Goffman, 1974; Fairclough, 1989).

O demonstrates her assumed power of authority verbally. Although each participant has an almost equal number of turns (S=41, O=41), O talks 70% of the time during the recorded interaction and O interrupts S 12 times. With each interruption O is successful in securing the floor, or the dominant position, as described by Edelsky (1981). On the other hand, S interrupts four times, but only once is she successful in taking the floor.

25 O: So you're not sure of your classes, or what, ok, did you register
26 for second half starting today or second half
27 S: yes second half...somebody made a mistake
28 so I start second half but they send me mail in the letter full time

This example is unique in the student keeping the floor after interrupting the staff member. Ervin-Tripp (1972) outlines several linguistic rules based on social variables which can be used to examine the present interaction. First, through line 54, the Rules of Alternation were followed: both S and O "no-named" each other and, instead of using individual names, consistently used "I" and "you," respectively. Second, following the Rules of Co-Occurrence, both participants used an informal style of talking: S with indirect speech, O with a more direct form. Third, the speech event was internally consistent, as the Rules of Coherence apply to intonation; for example, S's tone implied insecurity and

questioning as appropriate to the information-seeking event, while O was more authoritative in tone.

These rules were violated by S when she states, "Yes I think it's you." She switches from indirect speech to a direct reference to O, even in replying to the indirect question asked of her as demonstrated below:

61. O: =you want to change to an F-1. Did you give us
62 a bank statement and..
63 S: I, I gave someone, but she she told me she didn't need it
64 O: was it in this office?
65 S: Yes, I think it's you

Third, S changes her tone to one of accusation. Upon reflection these violations were determined to be the cause of O's confessed interpretation of the student being rude (Gumperz, 1982:132). The rest of the interaction is characterized by increased rate of O's speech, signaling stress, by direct statements rather than questions, signaling inducement, and by the use of performative words such as "need" (Austin, 1975) signaling persuasion (see Hymes, 1974:22). In addition there is a small but significant change in pronoun usage by both participants in lines 54-91: the use of "you" is increased by S, decreased by O; conversely, the use of "I" is increased by O, decreased by S (Table 2).

Table 2: Pronoun usage lines 54-91

	I	me	my	you(re)	your	she	we	(let)us	they
S:	10	3	3	3	0	3	0	0	1
O:	3	1	0	13	3	0	2	1	1

In overview, O's strategies are to take control of the situation. She presupposes (Silverstein, 1976) that she understands S's problems. It became evident upon reflection by O as a participant-observer that she, in fact, did not understand what the student had wanted. O continually interrupts (12 times), uses the imperative function to persuade S to do something (Hymes, 1974), and takes away from S any psychological power. Prosodic features, such as her lack of rising intonation for many of her questions, are also evident. Tense-markers and shifters reinforce the indexing O uses (Jakobson, 1971) as well as the resulting positioning of S as inferior to O's authority (Davies & Harre, in press).

Interactions are also influenced by a speaker's mindset, or schema, which is less dynamic than a frame and which is determined by a merging of one's "cultural baggage."(Fisher, 1988). These cultural, or psychocultural, aspects of schema are described by Fisher's five categories: Situation and Context, Knowledge and Information Base, Image, Cultural and Social Determinants, Individual Personality and Group

Dynamics (Fisher, 1988). Based on the investigators' cultural knowledge of power relations in an information-seeking encounter and on comments made in the student interviews, it is impressive that S reattempts to get what she wants although O makes it clear in line 54 that the transaction has been completed.

Group Dynamics

We have illustrated the relationships between form and function, between an individual's present and past experiences, and between language and culture. These relationships influence interactions at the dialogue level between participants, as we hope to have demonstrated in the above transcript analysis. In addition, it is apparent that an individual's interaction style affects what is understood by the participating interlocutor. It is important to recognize that these relationships affect group dynamics as well. We will now move away from an isolated interaction interpreted at the micro-level to a bigger picture of what is occurring at IEP at the macro-level. The comments from the questionnaires and interviews indicate how styles and frames relate to group dynamics.

The students averaged a response to question 16 of 3.78 on a scale of 1 to 5 strongly agreeing that the IEP staff service was good. Several remarks reoccurred throughout the data, including "more staff needed," "should talk slowly and clearly," "more patience needed," "staff too busy," and "need more opportunity to speak with staff." Some students indicated that they did not interact with the staff at all, some specifically citing anxiety and frustration. However, 100% of the interviewed students stated that if they did not understand an answer they would ask or try again; the questionnaire response was 3.33 strongly agree (question 20). This is consistent with the findings of the discourse analysis of the taped interaction.

Since an overwhelming average of 4.14 (strongly agree) prefer to have questions resolved in person (question 5), these student concerns must be considered. Another concern expressed on the questionnaire was how IEP students relate to the university as a whole. Two specific problematic areas emerged from our collected data: 1) lack of validity on campus, and 2) ignorance of special needs of IEP students. As one student observed, "(IEP) office is smaller and it's not a 'real' department of the university, e.g. we are not (university) students."

Another student said during an interview that "the (IEP) staff is more patient than other people" and related her frustration in dealing with the campus bookstore staff. The student felt "unsatisfied with their service" because "they don't understand my English or they don't like my pronunciation." Students average a 3.48 (strongly agree) that they feel more comfortable asking questions to other (IEP) students (question 18). Indeed, a past

student worker reflected on the numerous times fellow students approached him with questions before going to the office staff.

In both the interviews and the questionnaires, many suggestions were made by the students regarding social and scholastic life at IEP. "Why doesn't (IEP) have a language laboratory?" was echoed by several students as well as a concern about the lack of ESL library books and audiotapes. The large classes and the perceived range of abilities within each level was criticized by at least 10% of the participating students, and a few wanted to change the "too early" or "too short" class periods. These last points are mute because there will always be unsatisfied students and logistic constraints on programs. The other suggestions are useful as a foundation for legitimizing further expansion of IEP. The most important part of group dynamics in a program such as IEP is the *esprit de corps*, or group fellowship and spirit.

This can be developed and fostered by, as one students suggested, "hold[ing]more activities to increase the interaction and communication between teachers and students, or between students and students."

Several of the comments indicated to the researchers that more group interaction is seriously needed to develop cross-cultural awareness among the students themselves. Exemplifying this need is students' judgments that "the Asian people [are] very quiet...need a push. [They] drag down the class, they don't work hard." Active and aggressive community building within IEP is necessary to help eliminate these attitudes.

Discussion

Recommendations

In response to these comments, we recommend a training session to increase the staff members' power of observation and make them better aware of culturally-channeled outlooks (Fisher, 1988). Special attention should be focused on the importance of slow speech, repetition, and increased wait time, i.e. giving students more time to express themselves. Staff members, teachers, and administrators must address these issues from the onset of the session. Winskowski-Jackson points out, "orientation is likely to be the first form of official welcome and introduction an international student receives from an institution" (1991:105). She adds that "the information and activities that help people in a foreign environment gain control of and familiarity with their schedule and with the environment are those that minimize initial culture shock" (105).

Student feedback in the interviews and questionnaires suggests that in fact most, if not all, information is lost during the initial orientation period because of anxiety, language insecurity, etc. Although it is difficult to pursue the recommendation made by a few

students to offer the new information in each of the students' native languages, it is possible and fitting to attend to their wish "to make interview with each student at the end of the month." This follow-up interview would benefit both IEP staff and students by verifying the students' assimilation into the new environment and would cover issues of health insurance, visas, tuition, housing and classes.

In addition, written materials should be made available to students to consult on their time (and at their own pace) covering all aspects of life at a university in a North American city like Philadelphia. Not only would this encourage the students to interact with the office staff and administrators, but it would empower them by giving the means to try to solve their own problems, which in turn may make them more confident when asking any remaining questions they have. In addition to the selfhelp manual, an IEP student should be trained to serve as a liaison between the students and the office staff members.

Because of the enormous and difficult task of educating all university staff members of the special needs of international students, and the impracticality of doing so in a small group situation, strategic competence should be heavily stressed in the students' course work (Canale & Swain, 1980). This can help IEP students "to cope with or remedy breakdowns in communication which result from lack of proficiency in the language" (Canale & Swain, 1980). As one student eloquently put it, IEP should "...design more basic situation conversation courses to help the foreign students to be more comfortable and convenient in America." However, more sensitivity training is still needed to bring multicultural issues to the forefront of staff awareness throughout the university.

One way to promote student recognition and validity on campus is to actively involve the IEP students with the rest of the student body. IEP activities should center around the sports, music, and other entertainment events sponsored by the University at large. Other ideas can be generated from one student's suggestion that "(IEP) can offer one-by-one, (sic) for example: one native student and foreign student live together all day for one month." We would recommend allowing IEP students to attend classes with American students at least one day of the term.

To promote good fellowship and spirit one recommendation is to create a student center, a room solely for social interaction. Individual student mailboxes would promote a sense of belonging as well as encourage communication among the students by facilitating easy access to their peers. A large, highly visible bulletin board should post city and campus events as well as information on roommates, ride shares, student birthdays, etc. The student handbook, self-help manual previously mentioned, and a suggestion box should be available in this center. The student center would be an ideal location for a daily coffee hour which would provide an opportunity for the students, teachers, office staff and

administrators to relax and converse in an informal environment. If highly organized and well-promoted, this would be a enjoyable and educating experience for all members of the IEP community group.

Limitations of the Study

After reviewing the data collection and methods of analysis, several areas of improvement have been identified. First of all, the questionnaire is too long. It took the IEP students approximately 20 minutes to complete and was difficult for many of them to understand. This could explain why many of the questionnaires were not returned. Although we were pleased with the 36% that were returned, more would have provided further insight. The students often had difficulty with the rating system; although it is common in the United States, it is not a familiar procedure in other countries. It seems that this type of data collection is too culture-specific.

Secondly, the interviews were too long: the open-ended questions may have been broad to excess. Although we collected information that was both interesting and helpful in making general suggestions for the program overall, the information was not specific enough for an analysis of communication breakdown.

Thirdly, several aspects of the interaction collection and analysis have been identified as problematic. Primarily, the excessive participation of the researchers leads to questions of the objectivity of this particular study. It was unavoidable that the critical incidents were identified by the researchers themselves because they were often the taped individuals. To be truly effective, the findings of such a study should be presented to the administrators and other staff members for confirmation of findings and feedback to be formally included in the written presentation (Ulichny, 1991)

Conclusion

The above analysis of an inter-ethnic service encounter is representative of what Erickson and Shultz (1982) refer to as a gatekeeping situation, where one of the participants has the power to give or deny access to information. Our ensuing discussion of interview and questionnaire data demonstrates the many issues of assumptions and expectations in all kinds of cross-cultural interactions. By examining the grammatical constructions, frames, and group dynamics of American office workers and international students at an intensive English language program, it is apparent that greater understanding of diverse interaction styles is necessary and that a lack of such an understanding will result in the increased possibility of miscommunication.

In addition, the study seems to show how small scale research projects within an institution can result in implementation of recommendations for change. Following a presentation of a draft of this paper, the following proposals were implemented at the IEP: student interviews, an international coffee hour, increased activities (i.e. sports), a student handbook, and a bulletin board for announcements.[4]

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[1] If the researchers could not obtain permission to use the recorded data, the data was discarded.

[2] The students who were interviewed also gave the researcher prior permission to use the data collected.

[3] This office staff member was also one of the reseachers.

[4] This paper was originally written for ED 673, Intercultural Communication, Fall term, 1992 with Rebecca Freeman.

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Appendix A

M_____F_____ IEP level (please circle): 1 2 3 4 5 6 Elective only
Country of origin _____ Native language_____

Please rate your opinion using the scale 1 (strongly agree), to 3 (agree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Please use the space available to make any comments or suggestions.

1 Good interaction is defined as when the speaker's message is correctly responded to by the listener.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

2 I have had good interaction with the IEP office staff.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

3 I have had good interaction with the IEP teachers.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

4 I have had good interaction with the IEP administrators
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

5 I prefer to present my questions in person.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

6 I prefer to present my question in writing
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

7 I prefer to present my questions over the telephone.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

8 I prefer to have my questions resolved in person.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

9 I prefer to have my questions resolved in writing.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

10 I prefer to have my questions resolved over the telephone.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

11 If I had a personal problem (non-IEP) I would go to my teachers(s).
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

12 If I had a personal problem (non-IEP) I would go to the office staff.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

13 If I had a personal problem (non-IEP) I would go to the administrators.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

14 I have already had difficulties with (check all that apply)

_____health insurance	_____tuition	_____class enrollment
_____activity sing-up	_____housing	_____admission
_____visa	_____IEP trips	_____other _____

15 I presented my difficulty to the IEP staff (please circle) YES NO
If NO, why not?

16 The help I have received from the IEP staff has been good.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

17 I would go to IEP staff again. YES NO Why not?

18 I feel more comfortable asking questions to other students.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

19 The office staff service is helpful.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

20 If I didn't understand an answer I would ask/try again.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

21 If I was not happy with the IEP office staff's help I would say so.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

22 The IEP office is similar to a university office in my home country.
strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 strongly agree

23 Interaction fails when: (please fill in the blank)

24 What can the IEP office staff do to help serve you better?

25 What are the differences between the IEP office and a university office in your home country?

26 How would you describe the IEP office staff?

27 Please add any other comments or suggestions.

Appendix B: Questionnaire Responses

Question #	French	Indonesian	Chinese	Thai	Korean	Spanish	Japanese	Arabic	Persian	Total %
1	3	3	4.19	4.43	3.29	3.5	3.89	3.67	4	3.66
2	3	4	2.72	3.29	3.00	4.0	3.33	4.16	4	3.57
3	4	4	3.72	3.29	3.50	4.0	4.00	4.40	4	3.05
4	3	4	2.54	2.83	2.71	3.6	3.00	2.67		2.32
5	4	3	3.81	4.00	3.25	3.6	3.44	4.33	5	2.89
6	2	2	3.63	2.86	2.13	2.3	2.67	1.83	1	1.89
7	3	2	2.37	1.71	2.38	1.6	1.89	1.83	1	1.37
8	4	4	3.81	4.43	3.13	4.5	3.89	4.50	5	4.14
9	4	2	2.54	3.43	2.50	2.7	2.30	2.83	1	1.97
10	3	2	2.54	1.29	2.43	2.0	2.22	2.50	3	2.69
11	5	1	2.81	3.14	3.0	2.7	3.00	4.00	4	2.73
12	3	1	3.46	2.29	2.57	2.3	2.11	2.83	1	2.41
13	3	4	2.28	2.57	2.67	1.7	2.66	2.75		2.32
14										
15										
16	3	5	3.45	4.00	3.29	3.75	3.75	3.80	4	3.78
17										
18	3	4	3.37	3.71	3.71	2.1	3.78	2.67	5	2.73
19	3	4	3.91	3.71	3.43	3.5	3.70	3.50	5	3.75
20	4	5	3.91	4.29	4.14	4.3	4.30	4.17	4	3.33
21	4	4	2.72	2.43	3.29	3.0	3.20	3.00		3.29
22	3	3	2.00	2.29	2.86	2.7	2.38	2.20	4	2.50

Appendix C: Transcript

1. S: I need registration
2. O: right, but you filled you the application form right?
3. S: yeah
4. O: and so now you need to take a test
5. S: Yeah I took, took...
6. O: you took a test... ok so you're ju-
7. you're not sure now what you're suppose to do is that it?
8. S: y-
9. O: or you're not sure of
10. your classes?
11. S: Yeah I didn't know registration means so
12. O: OH registration just meant to fill out
13. an application and pay tuition and ....
14. S: when I pay tuition
15. O: Okay, as soon as possible
16. S: Where? ((laugh))
17. O: here=
18. S: okay
19. O: =everything is here=
20. S: okay
21. O: =and whenever you have any questions come here I'll try to help you
22. S: uhh...
23. O: oh that's ok
24. S: I can't.... Can I check ((unintelligible))..I'm not sure ((laugh))
25. O: So you're not sure of your classes, or what, ok, did you register
26. for second half starting today or second half
27. S: yes second half...somebody made a mistake
28. so I start second half but they send me mail in the letter full time
29. O:Ok so lets just check I ok, What is your family name?
30. S: J_
31. O: J-- ((spells))..((checks in the computer))..., and is it umm..wait lets try it
32. again and your first name
33. S: Y-- K-- ((spells))
34. ((Administrator interrupts))
35. O: okay, and this is your mailing address=
36. S: yes
37. O:=and we have you full time and you are second half, right?
38. S: yeah
39. O: and so you are second half fall term full time
40. S: yes full time
41. O: okay second half and so... your bill will be different then. di- did
42. you? umm Your bill is $950
43. S: $950?
44. O: right, ok
45. S: Can I pay now?
46. O: Sure, that would be wonderful okay
((Administrator interrupts))
47. S: do check?
48. O: uhuh. Do you need a pen?
49. S: N-no. I don't have know who
50. O: Oh D- University
51. S: oh
52. O: I can put it there..((fills out check)). okay let me give you a receipt ((long
53. pause)) okay, you're all set....okay.
54. S: umm.. somebody called me,hmm she need some letters. like things like
55. bank state ment or

56 O: Oh. Let me see.. um well... what kind of visa do you have?
58. S: B-2
59 O: B-2. do you want to change to a=
60. S: yes
61. O: =you want to change to an F-1. Did you give us
62 a bank statement and..
63 S: I, I gave someone, but she she told me she didn't need it
64 O: was it in this office?
65 S: Yes, I think it's you
66 O: Okay...and...what did I say?
67 S: you, you didn't need it...a bank statement
68 O: if you...
69 S: I have it right now...
70 O: I really... You want to cahnge to F-1, right?
71 S: i don't know
72 O: Do yo- see, you don't need to change to F-1
73 S: I want to change to F-1
74 O: You do. Okay. Then we do need it...(long pause)
75 Okay, now and the bank statement is in you name?
76 S: I...no, my aunt
77 O: No, then you need a letter of support as well
78 S: Letter support you need it?
79 O: If you want to change to an F-1 visa, which you do...then you need the bank
80 statement=
81 S: I-
82: =but then we also need a letter from you autn stating=
83: I-
84: O: =okay you
85: have that
86: i brought-
87: okay, good...okay and so what is
88: My aunt, my aunt sent it
89: O: okay and so I am going to send this up to international services office...and
90 in about one week they will change your B-2 visa to an F-1
91 S: and they will send me-
92: O: right. to...this address
93: S: okay
94 O: okay, allright
95: S: okay, everything finished?
96 O: yep